and their legal heirs. Such prompt follow up might enable the banks and/ or legal heirs, where applicable, to take such steps as are necessary to change the status of the accounts and will also reduce the quantum of unclaimed deposits of the banks, both in regard to amount and number.

Under Section 26 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 the banks are required to submit a return of accounts which have been inoperative for more than 10 years to the RBI. As on 31st December, 2004 a total of Rs. 794 crore was lying unclaimed with public sector banks in accounts inoperative for more than 10 years.

Uniform Tax of Diesel

†1618. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in those States of the country where the Value Added Tax had been enforced with effect from April, 2005, the State tax on diesel is not being charged uniformly;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) what is the percentage of tax on diesel being charged in each of those States of the country where Value Added Tax system is in force; and

(d) the reasons for not charging the uniform tax rate on diesel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (d) VAT is a State subject under Entry 54 of the State List of the Constitution of India. The design of VAT (including rates of tax on various items) has been finalized by the States collectively, through the deliberations in the Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers, accordingly to which a few items of goods have been kept outside VAT and the same shall continue to be taxed as per the Uniform Floor Rates (UFR) decided by the Empowered Committee. The UFR for diesel

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

is 12.5% for North Eastern States, Sikkim and J&K and 20% for the other States. Since this is only a "Floor Rate", the States can fix a rate higher than this rate.

According to the information received, the States/UTs, who have fixed the rates of tax on diesel below the UFR, are NCT of Delhi (12.5%), Punjab (8.8%), Haryana (12%), Himachal Pradesh (14%), J&K (12%), Mizoram (12%) and Nagaland (12%). Regarding reasons for fixing rates below UFR, Punjab has stated that the State's economy is primarily agrarian and higher rate of diesel would adversely affect agriculture and that the State Assembly did not approve revision of the 8.8% rate. Haryana has stated that the low rate of tax is due to low rate of tax in Punjab and because Haryana being an agrarian State had to protect the farmers. The contention of NCT of Delhi and Himachal Pradesh is that they had to keep the tax rate low, because the rate was below UFR in their neighbouring States. In case of other States, the deviations are of marginal nature.

Low Per Capita Income

†1619. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is among the ten big countries of the world in terms of Gross Domestic Product;

(b) if so, the names of these ten big countries of the world and the rate at which their Gross Domestic Product has been assessed;

(c) whether it is also a fact that despite having higher GDP India's per capita income is very low as compared to these countries; and

(d) if so, what is India's position in the world in terms of its per capita income?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (d) As per the information available in the World Development Indicators Database of the World Bank, Gross

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